



Director - Gia Desantis

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### **Gia Desantis**

Hi everyone, I'm Gialyn! I am so excited to be returning to Kimball-Jenkins as your Camp Director this summer. For the past three years, I've served as a Site Director for the YMCA, overseeing before and after-school programming for elementary students. My background in youth leadership also includes time as the Arts and Crafts Coordinator for the YMCA Day Camp, which perfectly complements my current work as Kimball-Jenkins' Art Exploration teacher.

After having the privilege of serving as the Lead Counselor here at Kimball-Jenkins last summer, I'm thrilled to step into this new role. As an American Camp Association Certified Camp Director, I am committed to creating a safe, high-quality environment where fun, art, and community come together for every camper.

Though I enjoy all forms of art, I'm a ceramic artist at heart. When I am not teaching or making art of my own, I spend my time traveling, getting lost in a good mystery book or spoiling my kittens.

I am looking forward to an incredible summer filled with creativity. My goal is to help create those core memories that stick with kids for a lifetime, while bringing out the unique artist in every one of our campers. I can't wait to see what we create together!

## Assistant Director - Rob Luger

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### **Rob Luger**

Rob Luger has been working in education for over a decade in many roles ranging from early childhood education, working with kids as a paraprofessional at the Elementary and High School level, co teaching Kimball Jenkins Art Lab program, and at the Granite YMCA Summer Camp as a program director and behavior specialist. In each of these roles he has gotten to experience the joy of helping kids express themselves in many ways and watching as their skills progress. Rob has always had a great appreciation for Art and a love of being outdoors, finding the beauty of nature inspiring. In his free time he enjoys

blacksmithing, photography, & ceramics, as well as a variety of other arts. He is looking forward to supporting fun, new experiences & creating treasured memories in his role as Assistant Summer Camp Director at Kimball Jenkins.

## Summer Teachers

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### **Olivia Ramirez**

Olivia Ramirez is a teacher, artist, and student studying Studio Art and Art Education at UNH. She began working at Kimball Jenkins in the summer of 2024 as a summer camp counselor, then moved on to becoming a teacher all year round, and is returning as a summer camp teacher for the second year in a row. During her time at KJ Olivia has taught all ages, ranging from first grade to adult. She taught Intro to Watercolor, Fantasy Watercolor, mixed media,

collage, needle felting, acrylic, and has even offered free open studio days at DIY Craft & Thrift for families looking to engage in a free activity over the

weekend. She believes art has the power to make change, that art should be accessible to all, and that it is an extremely necessary part of human existence and personal growth. As Olivia returns to teach at KJ Summer Camp, she is excited to meet new faces as well as greet returning ones, and teach fun and engaging activities for all campers to enjoy!



### **Ari Murphy**

Ari is a dedicated stay-at-home mom to her energetic 2-year-old son. Before embracing motherhood, she built a fulfilling career as a preschool teacher in New Hampshire, California, and Washington. Ari's teaching philosophy centers around the belief that every child is an artist, and she consistently integrated art into her classroom to inspire creativity and self-expression. In 2019, Ari earned her Bachelor's degree in Youth Development and Education, with a minor in

Adventure Education, from Plymouth State University. This unique combination reflects her passion for nurturing young minds through both creative and experiential learning. Outside of teaching and parenting, Ari enjoys spending quality time with her family—her husband, son, and their beloved dog. She also loves reading, exploring the outdoors, and socializing with friends.



### **Natalie Lessard**

Natalie Lessard decided to be a puppeteer because they discovered it wasn't physically possible for them to grow up to be a cartoon. Their curious nature led them to a lifetime of interdisciplinary arts, such as drawing, sculpting, painting, sewing, etc. Their goal has always been to create things that would bring more whimsy to the world. For the better part of a decade they have been building and clothing puppets, curating, producing slams, and performing. They produced The Granite State Puppet Slam which was named Best of

NH for New Cultural Event in 2019. Natalie is excited to share the magic of puppet building and performance with the students of Kimball Jenkins.



### **Marty Kelley**

For the past 25 years, Marty Kelly has worked as a full-time traditionally published children's book author & illustrator. Realistic portrait work in watercolor and pencil has always been his passion, however. Marty's current focus is split between creating highly realistic portrait art and working with stone, metal, and wood to create organic sculptures that surprise and delight viewers with materials being used in unexpected ways. Working in two entirely separate ways—tightly rendered realism in his

portraiture and much rougher abstract work in stone—has afforded Marty time to explore ways the two disciplines can inform each other. Each way of creating makes Marty think in different ways and brings him joy when he's making art.

## Counselors

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### **Sadie Chapman**

Sadie Chapman is a high school senior from New Hampshire who has experience in teaching secondary art education. She enjoys experimenting with a variety of mediums but enjoys painting the most. Sadie is drawn to capturing everyday observations through her work and paints many animal portraits and scenes from her camera roll. Outside of making art, she enjoys spending time outdoors, traveling, and visiting museums. This summer Sadie is thrilled to be encouraging creativity in the classrooms of KJ, and in the fall she will attend Boston University to study art education and psychology.



### **Ella Smith**

Ella Smith is an 3-D artist, fiber artist, and designer. She will be attending the Maryland Institute College of Art in the fall, where she will study education, textiles, fashion, and bioengineering. Her hobbies include reading, enjoying the outdoors, and LARPing. She is excited to help run activities with the kids and teach art.



### **Haley Ives**

Haley Ives is a mixed media artist and recent graduate of the University of New Hampshire, where she earned a Bachelor's degree in Studio Art with a minor in psychology. She will be continuing her education by pursuing a Master's degree in Art Therapy. She is passionate about the creative process and believes that art is a powerful tool for self-expression. She is excited to be a part of the Kimball Jenkins community, and looks forward to supporting students as they explore and create.



### **Maria Garofalo**

Maria Garofalo is an educator with experience teaching at a bilingual private school in Mexico, where she led creative learning workshops and supported students from diverse backgrounds. She brings a warm, inclusive approach to youth programs and is excited to join Kimball Jenkins as a camp counselor this summer.